



It is the month of gratitude. My list starts with you.

November 2022

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Dear ones,

Preparing this month's letter, I ended up down a rabbit hole trying to figure out when, exactly, I sent my first newsletter. The first in the [archives](#) is from 2012, but I know I started long before that, if only because this is #248. I recall the first few years of events having a green felted journal gifted to me by my grandmother on the table in front of me, primed to capture emails. If you've been a part of this journey since those days, bless you. Our anniversary is nigh, my first novel was published exactly fifteen years ago this month. So much has happened, yet it hardly seems like a moment has passed. Of course, it has—[It's One Of Us](#) will be my 25th published novel. There are countless short stories, novellas, essays, a second pen name, a television show and podcast (and a few more books in the hole), but 25 is a lovely number. While I sometimes feel a bit lazy, there's no denying I've been hustling for a while now—and it's all for you.

We have a sacred connection, you and I. I've pulled one of my multiple battered copies of Stephen King's [ON WRITING](#) to reread the first explanation I heard about this connection that made sense: it's telepathy. My words are crossing some crazy space-time continuum to land in your brain, and when that happens, we are connected. It doesn't matter if it's this newsletter, which I started writing November 4 and handed over to you today, or the first words you read of mine, which I wrote so many years ago. The immediacy of the written word, this intimate connection of thought and story, is remarkable. That so many of you have been with me since the beginning is also remarkable. I'm beyond grateful that what I'm doing works for you.

And for those of you who are just beginning to know me, to fall in love with Taylor and Sam and Baldwin, or Sutton and Ethan, or Claire and Jack, with the Nashville that finds itself in every story, with themes of redemption and power and justice that dance through all the pages, you are so very welcome! There are many stories to come, and I'm excited you're here for the ride.

Fifteen years ago, I had exactly zero idea I'd be here, in this moment, experiencing the emotions that have flooded me today: joy, fear, frustration,

gratitude. For starters, I thought it would get easier. It doesn't. I hoped to be a bestseller. I am. I thought I'd have the same crew of friends, the same agent, the same editors and publishers. I don't. I made one overarching decision early on in my career: Stay in the game. I have.

Life changes us, naturally. The creation of the work changes us, hopefully for the better, to be stronger, richer writers. Your experience with the story changes us. Some of them you adore, and some you don't. Every story that is no longer ours, but yours, as [IT'S ONE OF US](#) is about to be, comes with the same fears. Will you like it? Will you hate it?

There's no telling. So I will share with you my deepest truth. Regardless, I am grateful that you're here, that you're reading my stories, and that we have this connection. You have made me who I am, made me the writer I've become, and I don't know how to thank you for those gifts, other than to keep my head down and write you more books. Thank you for letting me. I promise I will never come lightly to the page.

Poll

I LOVE how much fun y'all are having with the polls! Not surprisingly, the vast majority of you like newsletters (so smart) and the second place is Facebook pages.

Taking this into consideration, and since our many social media outlets seem to be in a mass upheaval, I'm going to be more active on the [blog](#). Nothing crazy, but a modified Smatterings. I'll share essays, writing tips, early access to [A WORD ON WORDS](#) episodes, and other surprises. If you'd be interested in hearing from me more often, this is your chance. I can land in your inbox with a simple click below.

[Gimme that blog goodness](#)

Speaking of social media... if you're on TikTok (which, according to the poll, was exactly one of you LOL), [I do now have an account](#).

This month's poll...

I'm curious what you're thinking about social media and state of the newsletter these days.

How Long Have You Been Getting My Newsletter?

[From the Beginning!](#)

[10-12 Years](#)

8-10 Years

4-7 Years

1-3 Years

Just Joined, I'm New!

📅 Date Change for IOOU

My publisher has moved the date for [IT'S ONE OF US](#), but never fear, it only means you'll get your hands on the book earlier!!!! It's now releasing on **February 21, 2023**. I'll have information about tour dates as soon as the new schedule is set.



[PRE-ORDER NOW!](#)

📅 A Word on Words is back!

Season 8 has kicked off with a bang! We have some epic shows ahead, but we start with a [Get To Know The Host](#) episode so you can meet Jeremy Finley! We are also now available in long form, so you can see the entire 20-30 minute interview, or listen as a podcast, from your favorite service (I'm a fan of Overcast myself...) Just search for [A Word on Words Nashville Public Television](#), like and subscribe!



▣ Reads and Faves



[Spells for Forgetting](#) by **Adrienne Young** - I couldn't stop listening to this. It's the perfect mix of murder mystery meets magical realism, coupled with an epic tale of a love for the ages.

[We Are the Light](#) by **Matthew Quick** - A story of hope and redemption of a man trying to heal his small town after a mass shooting. It is luminous.

[Secluded Cabin Sleeps Six](#) by **Lisa Unger** - Lisa is back with another unforgettable suspense, this time with shades of Agatha Christie in the mix!

[ON WRITING](#) by Stephen King - the ultimate must-read if you're interested in becoming a writer.

Some more of my faves this month...

TV: [The School for Good and Evil](#) (Absolutely adorable, totally overacted in all the best ways by an all-star cast, and a wonderful message about the power of friendship)

Podcast: [Cal Newport Deep Questions](#) - I love pondering productivity and how to live a meaningful life. Truly might change your life. And for those of you who like to watch instead of listen... you're in luck!

New Discovery: Nothing better than looking at [author writing spaces!](#)

New Obsession: It's clog time! I bought [these](#) last year and I've been living in them.

☐☐ November Recipe: Sausage Cornbread Stuffing



This is a repeat, but since I'm going to be making this imminently, I thought I'd share again, because it is by far my favorite Thanksgiving side. For you non-Celiacs, you can follow a regular cornbread recipe, but for those of us who are GF - make sure you have the cornbread nice and dry to make the texture right. Enjoy!

THAT SOUNDS GOOD!

You can find all of my recipes [here](#), and if you want some wine to go with the meals, [The Wine Vixen](#) has you covered.

□ Contest

Every month, I draw a name from those of you who open the newsletter and send that lovely person a \$30 gift card to the bookstore of their choice. It's my way of saying thanks for being here. Congrats to last month's winner: Pam S!

And don't forget to enter this month's drawing below!

[I WANT THAT GIFT CARD!](#)

Wishing you a blessed Thanksgiving! Eat all the food without an ounce of guilt, love on everyone you can near and far, read something great, and know I'm here, always.



Are you still here?

Here's a kitten for your troubles!



Did you like this newsletter? Share it with a friend!



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